DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 390 737 SO 025 518

AUTHOR	Schroeder, Judy; Blanton, Eileen
TITLE	Peace Talks: Classroom Activities To Enhance Communication and Conflict Resolution Skills.
INSTITUTION	Louisville Univ., KY. Women's Center.
PUB DATE	95
NOTE	42p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Peace Education Program, Inc., 318 W. Kentucky Street, Louisville, KY 40203.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Conflict Resolution; *Cooperation; Friendship; Global Education; *Group Dynamics; Helping Relationship; Interaction; *Interpersonal Communication; Interpersonal Relationship; *Peace; *Prosocial Behavior; Rapport; Teamwork
IDEN IFIERS	*Peace Education

ABSTRACT

These lesson plans describe some of the basic conflict resolution lessons developed and used over the past years. The collection focuses on seven communication skills, sequenced from skills and activities that generally require the least amount of trust to those that require more. The skills identified include: (1) attention; (2) observation; (3) feelings of identification; (4) self-disclosure; (5) active listening; (6) open questions; and (7) assertion. Students progress through a series of activities to develop these skills and then work through conflict resolution simulations for win-win problem solving. Activities can be adapted to meet the needs of individual classrooms and can be used in an interdisciplinary fashion. Contains a 15-item conflict resolution bibliography. (EH)

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PEACE TALKS

Classroom Activities To Enhance Communication and Conflict Resolution Skills

by Judy Schroeder and Eileen Blanton, Peace Education Program

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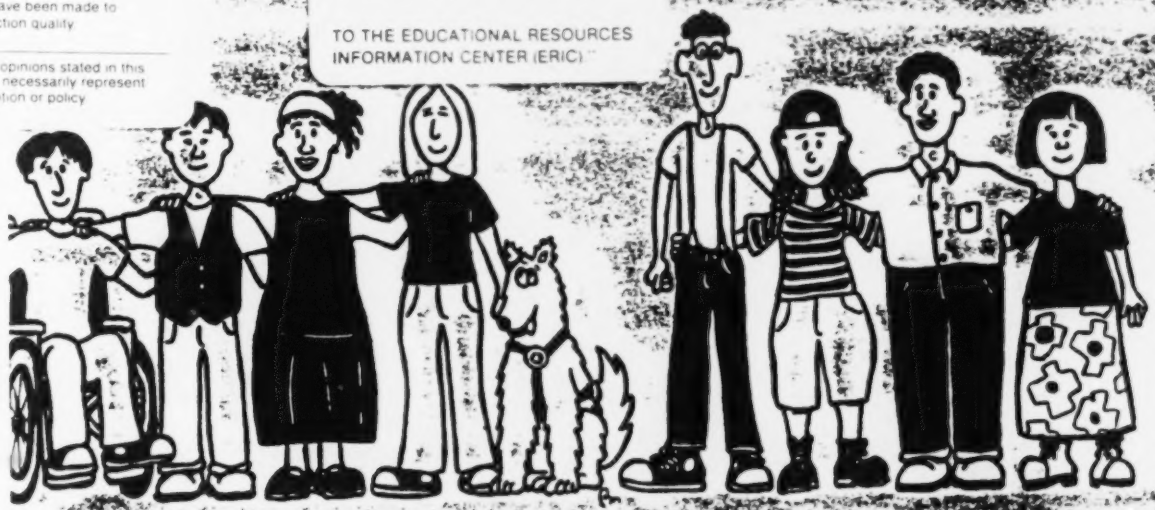

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Classroom Activities To Enhance Communication and Conflict Resolution Skills

written by Judy Schroeder and Eileen Blanton, Peace Education Program

illustrated by Paula Mattingly

Duplication for Educational Purposes Only

Published by the University of Louisville Women's Center

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Design by

ERIC B

B. Eric Bradley

Dedicated to Our Mothers,
who taught us our passion for justice
and
These Children who teach us how to use it.

JSW

ELB

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PREFACE

The lesson plans described here form some of the basic "conflict resolution" lessons that Peace Education Program has developed for our school system over the past years. It has been challenging and optimistic work, made all the more rewarding by the camaraderie of creative teachers, zestful young people, and the extensive network of children's advocates we get to work with on a daily basis.

That national network has produced many excellent resources that you'll find listed in the Bibliography of this manual, and referred to in the pages here. But one thing all such resource groups come to agree on is that lessons and programs don't substitute for the primary way young people learn about conflict-solving: People must see and feel some caring relationship in their own lives in order to integrate these lessons with their experience.

There are real skills here that can be accumulated just like reading or math skills, but also like reading and math, we need time to practice to get good!

It's been said before, but as one of the most important relationships in young people's lives, we must thank the teachers who try to build a safe community for our students and model the lessons spelled out here.

Secondly, and less obviously, let's acknowledge the difficulties students and their teachers are working within when structures surrounding the classroom experience make it so hard to accomplish the relationship you want. In Kentucky, new educational designs may allow us to restructure some variables, such as our time with students when focused time has been an obstacle to teaching. But other conditions accompany "conflict solving" in the classroom: ~ structures that permit students to talk to each other individually or as a class, ~ "team time" for teachers as well as students to form agreements about "respectful" behavior, how to define it and how to reinforce it, ~ classroom management methods that encourage cooperative roles for students (Cooperative Learning, Peer Mediation, etc. See "Engaging Cooperation", this manual.)

HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

Around the Peace Education Program we talk a lot about "Respect" because students are so often thinking about their conflicts as "fighting for respect" and "respectful" behavior is both an understandable and achievable goal.

There is another dynamic to be aware of while building a creative community in the classroom, however: Trust. Effective teachers tell us that building a cooperative, conflict-solving atmosphere in their classrooms took gradual but persistent steps, with small victories for them and the students as they experimented with these skills and activities over time.

If there were one attitude we could hand you to help make this work, I think it would be HAVE FUN! As a wise woman has said, "Conflict may not feel much fun at the time, but getting rid of it can feel great!" Recognize that those conflicts in the hall, or through notes to friends, draw so much attention because they're exciting and dramatic! Preventing conflict and solving conflict has some tough competition, so it helps to use the excitement and drama to creative benefit.*

This particular collection focuses on 7 Communication Skills (pp. 1-24), sequenced from skills and activities that generally require the least amount of TRUST to those that require more. They are NOT all appropriate for every age level. Please use your knowledge of your students to select what will work for you.

Any of these lessons may fit well into other units you are currently teaching: "Feelings Identification" during vocabulary or spelling, "Self-Disclosure" activities as writing prompts, "Active Listening" before understanding plot or character development in literature, as "Oprah Show" or "Problem Solving" lessons in social studies units about cultures, communications or conflicts, etc. Or build a Communication Workshop ("Circle Time") into your weekly schedule....AND ENJOY!

*Cheri Brown, Director, The National Coalition Building Institute, Washington, D.C.

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Introduction

This book is the result of a partnership between the Peace Education Program, the University of Louisville Women's Center, and the first annual Women 4 Women Golf Tournament. Judy Schroeder and Eileen Blanton of the Peace Education Program created and compiled successful teaching strategies based on classroom experiences. The Women's Center helped with evaluation, printing, and distribution. Women 4 Women provided funding.

This three-way partnership reflects the long-standing, worldwide links between women and peace. Throughout history, women have worked for peace. Christine De Pisan, born in Venice in 1365, was writing about women and peace more than 500 years ago. A "good princess will always be the means of peace as far as she can be," De Pisan wrote in *The Book of the City of Ladies*.

Five hundred years later, the non-Jewish wives of Berlin Jews successfully opposed the arrest of their husbands at the height of the Nazi regime. More than 6,000 weaponless women converged daily in the town square until their collective action gained the release of their men.

In the United States, women like Susan B. Anthony, Mary MacLeod Bethune, and Mother Jones fought oppression with peace and dignity. Rosa Parks, mother of the Civil Rights movement, showed how single actions can be the catalyst for great social change.

In all ages and every culture, women are associated with creative life-forces, care-giving, and peace. In the Navaho creation myth, Salt Woman represents the physical and spiritual powers of all humans, and she helps to heal the pain of life. Spider Woman weaves people together, connecting one to another. Given this history, the awful truth of widespread violence against women and girls in the U.S. today is even more shocking.

- According to the U. S. Department of Justice, one woman in our country is beaten every 15 seconds. Most of this violence is not random acts by strangers.

- More than 2/3rds of violent attacks against women are committed by someone the woman knew, again according to the Department of Justice.

Many women and men in the U.S. are helping to establish and maintain women's shelters and centers to prevent abuse, others are working for better laws and police practices. But stopping violence and promoting peace is the responsibility of us all.

The activities in this book are one way you can do something about the terrible violence against women endemic in our country today. These activities address the degradation of women and offer specific ways for a young woman to use her own power to stand up for herself with friends and allies.

Specific concerns about race and gender discrimination frequently are a part of the Conversation Ball discussion of "respect." Other activities accentuate the positive characteristics of women. The caring, curiosity, and communication that makes Oprah Winfrey a national institution is channeled into understanding diversity.

Please use these exercises and develop your own to help students learn how to deal with conflict before it escalates into violence. Through building skills in conflict resolution young women and men can break the cycle of violence which perpetuates the roles of victim and oppressor. Please help us and your students restore the links between women and peace, and make our world safer for all people.

Judi Jennings
Women's Center
University of Louisville

COMMUNICATION SKILLS & ACTIVITIES

Conflict often occurs for LACK of communication skills. It's always difficult to deal with a problem without understanding it. The following skills are necessary when developing an ability to listen and communicate. They are listed sequentially with each skill dependent on the prior steps for proper integration.

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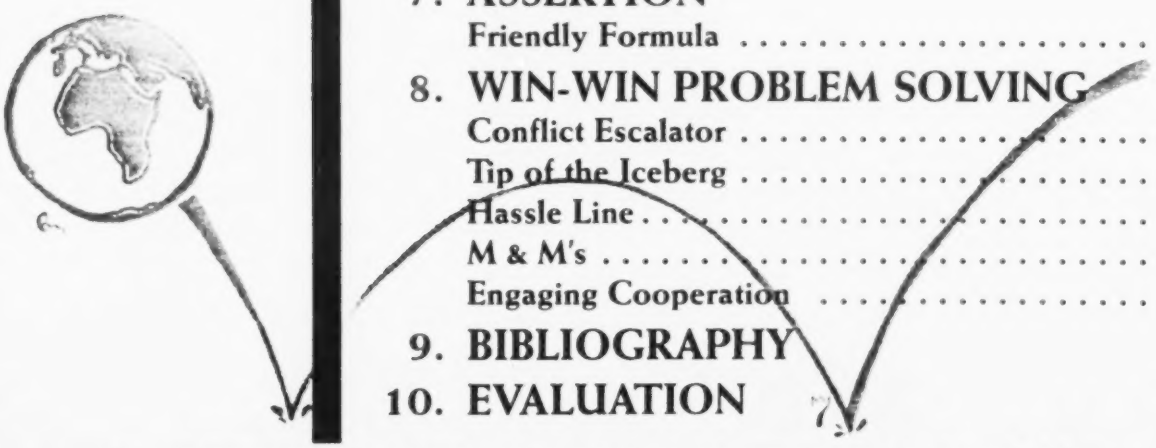

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ATTENTION

We all know how important it is to get attention in order to teach. Paying attention is the first and foremost of communication skills. Activities that assist your students in focusing their whole being on one point, one project, one concept will enhance their ability to pay attention.

** Have students close their eyes and listen to the many sounds in the room for 1 minute. Then brainstorm a list of what they heard. Do the same activity outdoors, as a way of preparing them to come inside after active play.*

** WHAT'S A MINUTE? With backs to the clock and watches off, instruct students to remain standing (or sitting) until one minute has passed. Then sit down (or stand up).*

** Take time to pay attention to breath and breathing, pulse and heartbeat. Use it as a time to slow down and re-focus. Get them to check their pulses after being in active play, before a test, after reading or doing something restful. Then incorporate into a math/science lesson.*

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Leprechauns

OBJECTIVE: Being able to PAY ATTENTION is the most basic communication skill. Students K-12 have enjoyed the skill test in this simple game and, once learned, it can be used frequently to pull the class together before a group activity, or as a group reward, or as a "sponge" for free time.

GRADES: K-12.

SET UP/MATERIALS: A bag, or short stick, or other light object that can be easily grabbed off a lap. Students seated comfortably around one empty chair.

DIRECTIONS: 1) Announce that you want to see how well this class listens, and ask "Who thinks they listen really well?"

2) Select the first candidate, and explain to the group that our objective will be to "steal" the bag/stick without making a sound for the person who's "It" to detect.

~"I'll point out students to try to sneak up and capture the bag/stick, while...
~'It' keeps his/her eyes closed....
~To catch us, all 'It' has to do is point out ANY SOUND THEY HEAR IN THE ROOM and...
~you're ALL frozen...
~until I (the teacher) selects someone else to try to sneak up."

Since we want the whole group's cooperation to keep the room silent, it's important to emphasize OUR objective, perhaps with a story:

A) LEPRECHAUNS: "It" is an Ogre asleep in a cave in Ireland, where the forrest is full of little people called Leprechauns who love gold. This Ogre is known to have a huge bag of gold that the Leprechauns want to steal, but he/she also has wonderful hearing that makes it very hard to get into the cave to snatch the gold! One-by-one our village will send out someone to try to capture the gold. Be very quiet, or the whole village will be frozen in place when the Ogre points you out!

OR

B) NATIVE HUNTER: [We're told this is a traditional game from Native American cultures to sharpen the same listening skills.] The hunter in this forest will be behind a "blind", so he/she has to listen carefully for the animals that will be trying to cross the path here. We're the forest creatures who have to sneak past the hunter and capture the stick before the hunter catches us by pointing out any noise he/she hears in this room!

3) Tell the whole group to "get comfortable...put down books, paper, etc." Give the Ogre/Hunter a final direction to keep their eyes closed, listen, and point out ANY NOISE they hear.

4) Play the game through 2-3 attempts, before interrupting to make your points about "Attention".

DISCUSSION:

1) Ask the students to stop for a minute and notice what has happened in the room:

~It's quiet. (focused on one thing)
~How are they sitting? (eyes/posture poised toward "It")
~How do they feel? (alert, ready to act)

This is what we mean by ATTENTION.

(more on next page)

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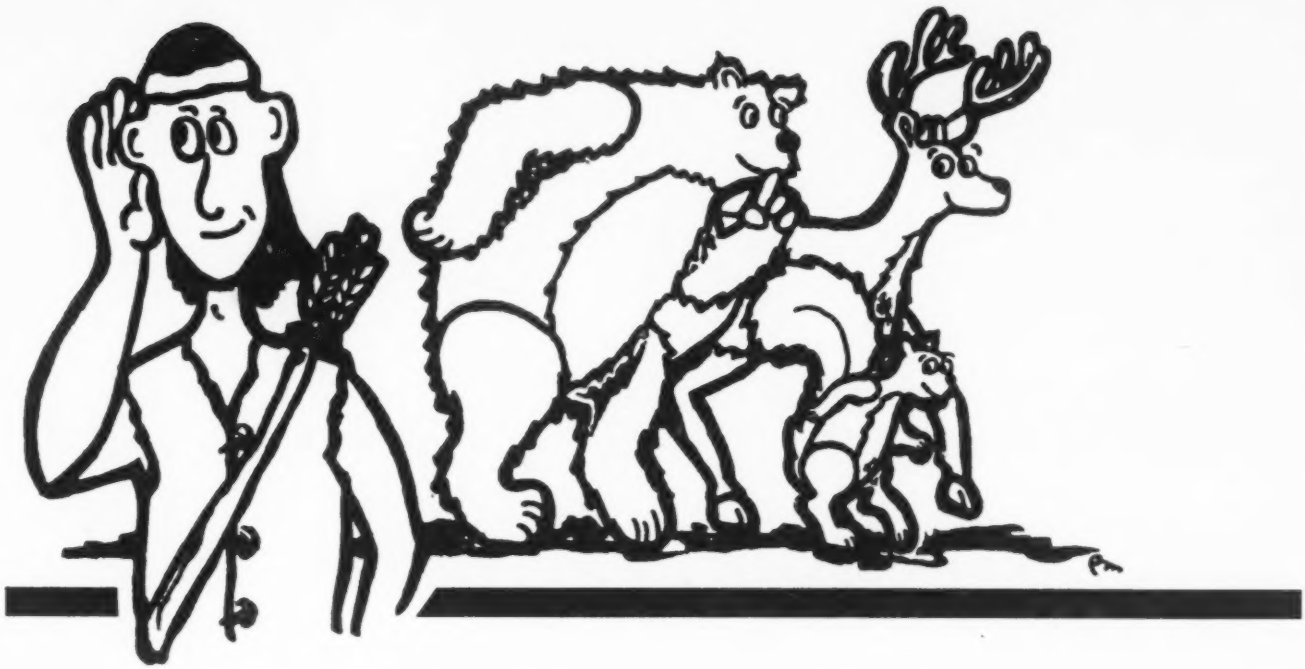
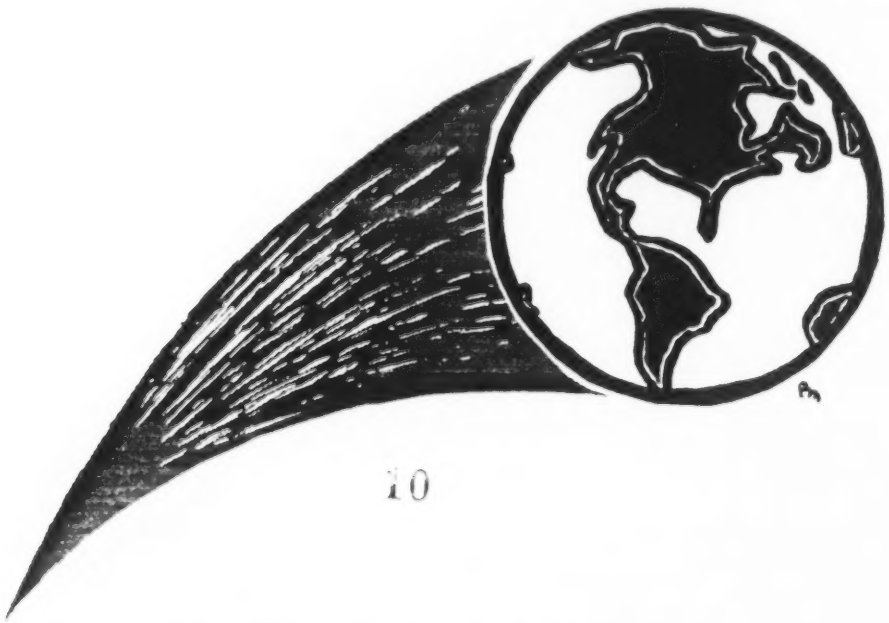


2) How many people want to be "It"? [We might not be able to give everyone a turn today, but...] Notice that people like to be the center of ATTENTION. Everyone likes that feeling sometimes, and we deserve to get/have attention. [Teachers need attention, too!]

CONCLUSION: Everyone likes to be the center of attention sometimes, and the way they are sitting right now for this game is a good way to show people that you're paying attention. [You may want to tell them you'll talk about positive ways to ask for attention, later.]

Go back and play a few more rounds of the game before ending this activity.



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OBSERVATION

Observation is paying attention plus making some mental "notes" about the object(s) of your attention. William Kriedler's book Creative Conflict Resolution, *©1984 Scott, Foresman and Co., has some excellent activities including:*

**CHANGES 1,2,3 (page 87)*

1. Have the students work in pairs. Student A should carefully examine student B for 30 seconds and turn around.

2. Student B should then change three aspects of his/her appearance, e.g. cross the arms differently, take jewelry off.

3. Student A tries to guess what B changed. Then student B observes and student A changes.

**EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS (page 86)*

1. At odd moments during the day, stop everything unexpectedly, and say, "Time for an eyewitness account."

2. Ask for a volunteer or two to give an account of what just occurred or what was just said in the room. Ask other class members to add to or correct the account.

3. Follow the same procedure when showing a movie or video. Pause the action and ask what was going on or being said.

For young children, play "The Open-Closed Game" described in Friendly Classroom for a Small Planet *by Priscilla Prutzman and Others, ©1988, New Society Publishers:*

Sit in a circle and explain that in this observation game children must look closely for clues to tell whether a book you will pass is "open" or "closed". The clue is that when your legs are apart the book is"open", and when your legs are crossed the book is "closed", even though in reality the book may be open. When children understand, begin passing around the book. Each child says "I am passing the book to you open" if her/his legs are apart or "I am passing the book to you closed" if his/her legs are crossed. (page 39)

OTHER IDEAS:

ADOPT A TREE in the school yard, notice the changes it goes through with each of the seasons. (Spring and Fall are particularly striking times. Keep a log of your observations.)

MIRRORING is a game that teaches children observation while mimicking someone else's actions. Model it with someone first. Have the young people pair off. One person leads with motions that the partner is to follow, as smoothly as possible. Increase the challenge by having each person lead together. A variation on the exercise is to have a small group mirror an individual or another group.

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My Potato

OBJECTIVE: Students will sharpen observation skills

SET UP/MATERIALS: A box of potatoes, one for every student.

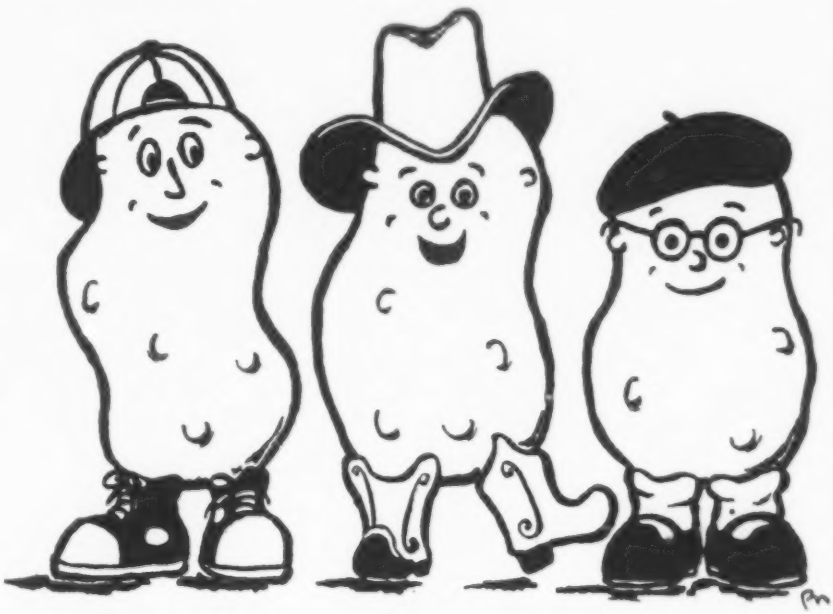
NOTES: This simple activity can be conducted between the beginning and end of another class, or completed in just a few minutes.

DIRECTIONS: "1-Potato. 2-Potato. 3-Potato. 4...5-Potato. 6-Potato. 7-Potato. More...."

1) Everyone gets a potato. Everyone gets to keep their potato for awhile, getting to know every turn of its shape; every mark and eye; how it fits into their own hand.

2) Collect the potatoes back in the basket.

3) Can you find it again?



DISCUSSION: How many of you are pleased that you've found your potato again? Who's confused? What makes it hard? What makes you sure you're right?

Problem-Solving Everyone might not have gotten their "own" potato back. If not, we can improve the level of satisfaction by taking a few steps:

~How many of you want a chance to find a potato again? (Gather all of the potatoes from those students, redistribute for study, collect, and let them try to find one from a smaller batch.)

~Watch for swaps, bargaining, comparisons and compromises. These are good negotiating skills and should be mentioned as positive behavior to the whole group.

Diversity "These are all potatoes. Why are they also all different?...People are like this, too. We're all humans, but we're also all individuals. Can we name some ways that all people are alike? And ways individuals are different?"

CONCLUSION: It's OK to notice how people are different, and even special to us, because we also know that we're all people, with many important things in common.

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Walks

OBJECTIVE: Easy practice with "Body Language". Participants will experience and understand the similarities and personal differences we communicate through posture and personal styles of walking.

SET UP/MATERIALS: Space large enough for whole group to walk around.

NOTES: If space is short, call for part of the group to participate, and the others to observe and evaluate.

DIRECTIONS:

1) Inform the class that today we'll be discussing how we communicate our feelings about ourselves and others almost unknowingly. "While we're just walking up, people can 'see us coming' and assume things about us from how we carry ourselves...our posture and personal styles. THEY MAY BE WRONG ABOUT US, but there is probably something we're DOING that sends a message about how we feel now.

2) If the terms haven't already by discussed, explain that generally we talk about three personal styles of handling conflict: (See: HASSLE LINES/GRAPH, pp. 27-28)

Confrontation: using strong feelings to come face-to-face with people about problems; aggressive

Denial: withdraws from problems, or even pretends that it isn't a problem so it won't have to be faced; passive

Problem Solving: handles problems by focusing on how people feel and the possible answers; assertive

3) Invite everyone to stand in an open area.

4) For only 30 sec - 1 minute each, direct the group to show you how they would walk through the halls...

- **aggressively** (Discuss)
- **passively** (Discuss)
- **assertively** (Discuss)

DISCUSSION: Discuss each style after it has been demonstrated, asking

- How do you feel? Is this familiar?
- How much contact was there? Eye contact?
- What were you thinking? (about yourself & others)

Extended Discussion:

1) When the group is seated and relaxed again, ask them to think about last time they saw a conflict get started in the halls. What kind of body language did they see from the participants before the conflict heated up? How were the observers (non-combatants) walking in the hall during the conflict? How did the participants walk away from the conflict? Why?

2) Has anyone here ever been called down for a fight/argument that felt like someone just "didn't like your looks?" (Tell us about it.)

3) Spend time going over the details of "Assertive" Walks/Postures: steady eye contact, pleasant/relaxed facial expression, comfortable/"dignified" stride. (Invite group to demonstrate personal walk-styles attached to different emotions, ie. cheerful, busy, dreamy, tired.)

CONCLUSION: We can take care of ourselves, and communicate with people around us, just with practice walking in a confident, positive posture.

DIALOGUE

[AFTER "ASSERTIVE" WALKS]

Q. What were you thinking?

A: "I feel bigger! Like I don't have to apologize for anything. I can move where I want without anybody bothering me about it." - Female, Fairdale High

A: "I was thinking, (at 6'4"-170 lbs) I can hardly keep from knocking everyone around just by walking by them!...I'm finally a Senior and I'm starting to figure out the way everybody always acts like I'm the one who starts everything. And I'm getting tired of how, all my life, everybody who's smaller than me comes running to get me when they get into trouble, like it's not supposed to bother me to get into a fight. Man! have I been set-up all these years." - Male, Fairdale High

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FEELINGS IDENTIFICATION

"Anyone who teaches knows that children do not leave their feelings outside the classroom door." *William Kriedler*

By teaching skills in feelings identification, we help young people name their feelings and begin to think about how their actions and feelings relate to conflict.

The Friendly Classroom for a Small Planet *has many excellent resources for the younger child, including SOCIAL BAROMETER: Draw a number scale on the board, ranging from plus 5 to minus 5. Have children gather at the zero mark. Have someone call out questions to the group on topics such as movies, siblings,money, doing homework, doing chores. Put in a simple yes or no format.("Do you like to going to the movies" or "Do you like the idea of having brothers or sisters?" Children with positive feelings about the question move toward that end of the scale, how far depending on how positive they feel. If they feel negatively, they move toward the opposite end. Might work best in smaller groups, not the entire class. (pg. 72)*

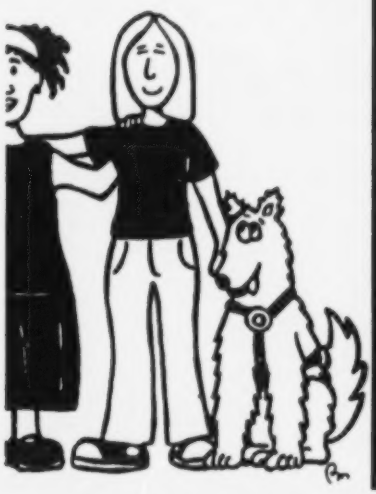
Other activities from the same book include MASK PASSING (pg. 22) and IF MY FEET COULD TALK (pg. 48).

Jim McGinnis and Camy Camdon, in their book Puppets For Peace, *have transformed a traditional song "If you're happy..." to IF YOU'RE ANGRY AND YOU KNOW IT:*

If you're angry and you know it Stop and Think *(repeat 2x)*
If you're angry and you know it It's okay you can control it
If you're angry and you know it Stop and Think.

Then brainstorm with children all the other things they can do that won't hurt them or someone else. The phrases need three syllables to replace "Stop and Think" in the song ("Shoot some hoops," "take a walk," "count to ten," "ride a bike," "talk it out," etc.)

William Kriedler suggests that teachers make feelings part of vocabulary work and dictionary exercises (pg. 110). In helping youth learn positive ways to express emotions, he holds weekly GRUMP AND GROWL sessions. "The class sits in a circle and everyone gets a chance to say what angered, annoyed, or frustrated him/her that week. Each student can say who was involved, what was done about the problem, and whether or not the situation was cleared up to his/her satisfaction. Unresolved problems can be turned over to the group for a problem-solving session." (pg. 114) He also encourages angry students to imagine themselves as comic book characters when they are angry. Using thought bubbles, he instructs them to work through this series of questions 1. Why am I angry? 2. At whom? 3. How angry on a scale of 1-10? and 4. What am I going to do about it?



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Feelings Charades

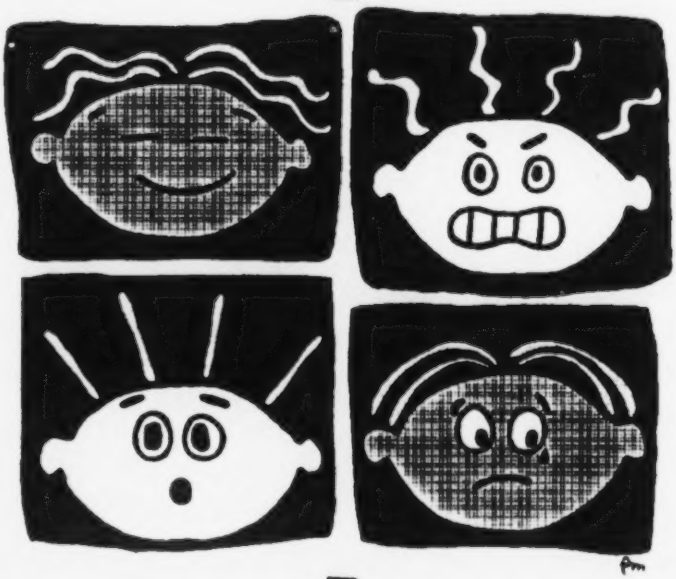
OBJECTIVE: To help students develop and expand feelings vocabulary.

GRADES: K-12.

MATERIALS: Index Cards with a feeling word written on each card.

Words could include:

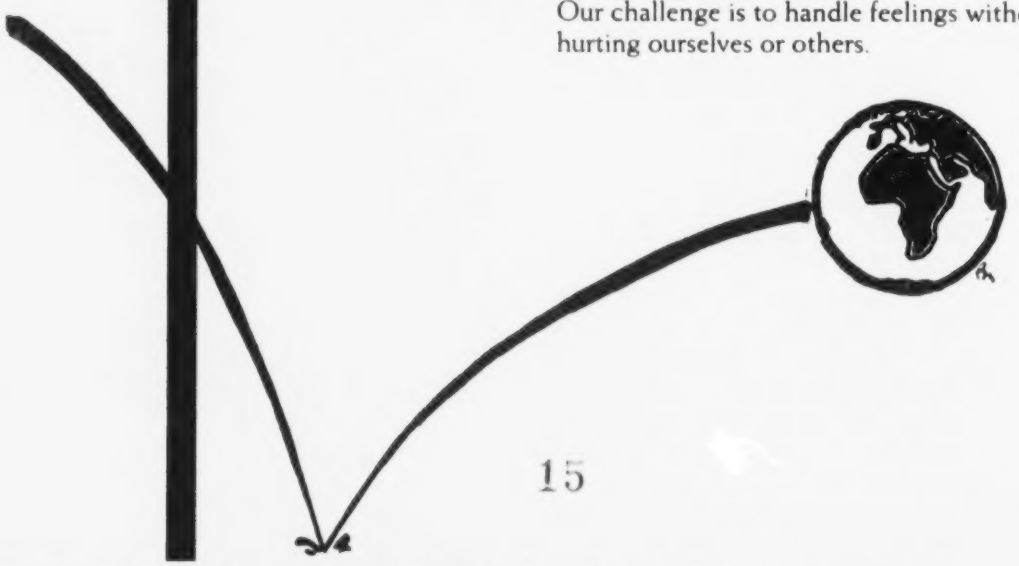
GLAD	SAD	MAD	SCARED
excited	depressed	angry	nervous
joyful	rejected	furious	worried
happy	bored	frustrated	anxious
proud	hurt	jealous	confused



NOTES: With younger children introduce and focus on the four major feelings only (GLAD, MAD, SAD, AND SCARED). A helpful clue for all students is to teach them that all other feelings are cousins to those 4 main feelings.

DIRECTIONS: Explain that you will play a charades game. Have a student choose a feeling card...act it out in front of the class...have the class guess it. "1-2-3: Now everyone show me what that feeling looks like."

EXPANSION: Create a feelings vocabulary list based on the words brainstormed by the students. Help students notice how much they can understand about each other from "body language," and how much can be misunderstood (See "Walks," p.6). Talk about constructive ways and destructive ways we handle our feelings. Help them know that feelings are important. Our challenge is to handle feelings without hurting ourselves or others.



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How high is your temper-ature

OBJECTIVE: To show students that there are a variety of gradations in any emotion. Mood maintenance.

GRADES: K-12.

SET UP/MATERIALS: Paper, paper clips

NOTES: Enlarge this thermometer to poster size and create a classroom feelings thermometer together OR enlarge it to 8 1/2" x 11" and have an individual thermometer for each child. Look at the feelings below. Add any that may have been left out.

DIRECTIONS:
Cut along the dotted lines. Insert a paper clip, using different colors for each class member or putting names on the clips. Encourage members to check their TEMP at different times of the day. Then move the paper clip to the location of your feeling. Measure the class temperature.
If someone's temperature is very high, or very low (on the right side), encourage them to talk about what's bothering them, or to take some "time out" to cool off.
Brainstorm as a class things they can do when angry that won't hurt them or someone else. (i.e.: take a walk, talk it out, count to 10...20...50, write it down, play a game, etc.)
If you're keeping a class thermometer, notice if there are particular times of day that are difficult for the whole class (before or after lunch, end of day...)
Brainstorm what the class can do to help each other out during the difficult times.

KEEP THIS IN A COOL PLACE

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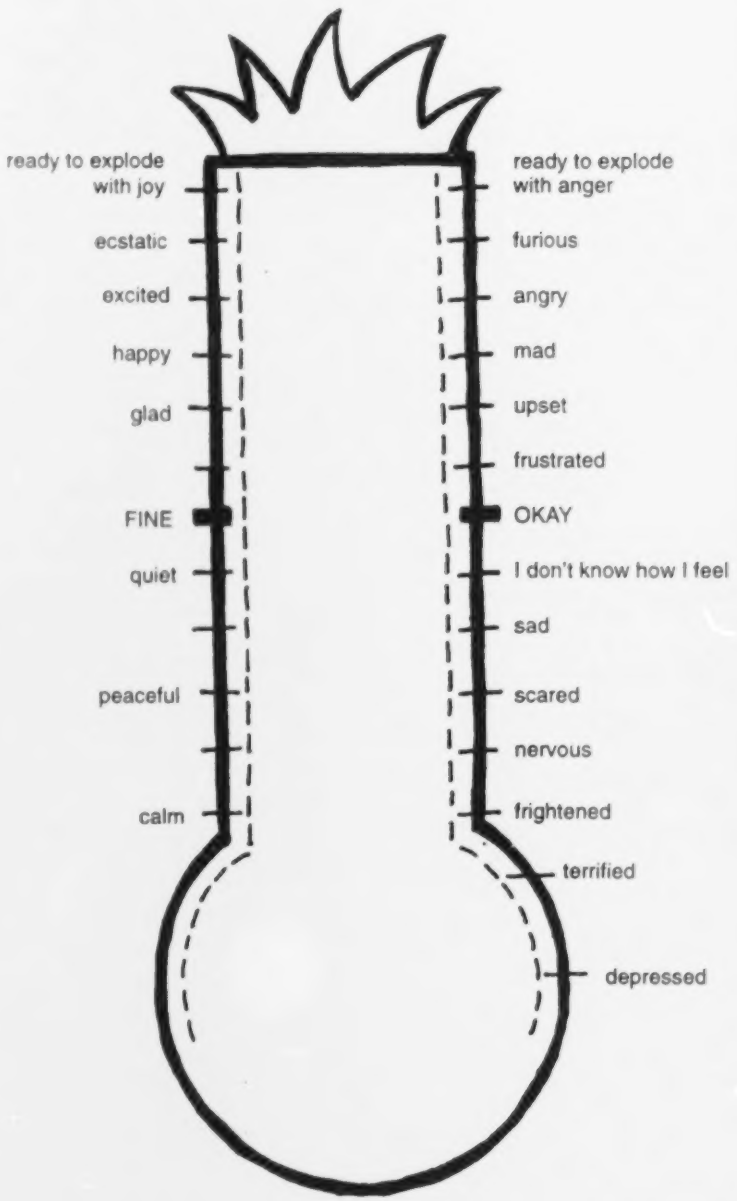


Anger Rattle

OBJECTIVES: Feelings identification
Mood maintenance

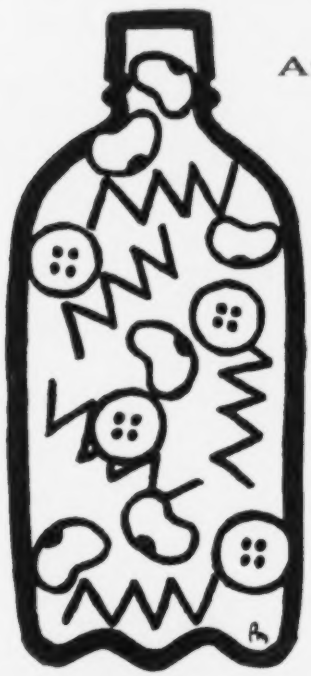
MATERIALS:
- enough plastic bottles or aluminum cans for each student
- strips of different colored paper
- dried beans, popcorn, etc (for noise)

NOTES: Some previous work on identifying feelings will be helpful;
Feelings Charades or some other feelings vocabulary
Thermometer

DIRECTIONS: Give out one plastic bottle/can per student. Explain to them that we will begin an activity that helps recognize and transform our angers and frustrations into music and rhythm. Instruct them to choose some strips of paper and think of something they're angry about or frustrated with, then write it down on the paper strip. (Feelings can be about what's bothering them, feels good, proud of, mad about, whatever)

Fold up paper accordion style (adds more variety/pattern to the see-through bottles) Add some beans, rice, popcorn, etc to create noise.

Use this at the end of the school day with children releasing their frustrations through music. Use any kind of rhythm based music that will allow them to play along with their new rattles.



Anger rattles
It shakes my bones
Give me a break
and leave me alone
I change my anger
and make up a song
I love to play
and I love to sing
I get respect
and I give the same

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SELF DISCLOSURE

As young people increase their level of trust, they will be willing to share more information about themselves, their thoughts and feelings - what gets difficult for them in their lives. Whenever we encourage young people to self-disclose, remember to start slowly with non-threatening questions (re: what they like/dislike, favorite place to visit, sport, music, food).

An ideal "icebreaker" is a game using concentric circles of youth. The inside circle faces out, with the outside circle facing in. (Each circle has the same number of participants) Make sure everyone has a partner. Tell the youth that you will give them a question to talk about with their partners. Each person has a minute. Then instruct the inner circle to remain stationary and the outer circle to rotate one person to the right–now everyone has a new partner! Ask a new question. Keep going until it seems appropriate to end or until they come back to their original partner.

From: Cooperative Learning, Cooperative Lives *by Schniedewind and Davidson.*

In Friendly Classroom for a Small Planet *by Priscilla Prutzman and Others, they describe SHARING CIRCLES.*

"The sharing circle promotes equal participation and a positive atmosphere. There are two ground rules: 1) everyone has a chance to speak, and 2) everyone is heard. Ask a question that will lead to an interesting discussion. Have children volunteer to go around the circle in turn, but limit each child's time to about thirty seconds. Use this exercise regularly and combine it with other techniques to improve the atmosphere in a group. Use it when conflicts arise to discuss problems in the class or integrate it into discussions of books, readings, plays, class trips or movies. As children become familiar with the sharing circle you can use it with more difficult topics, such as 'When was a time you felt excluded?' Use it only when children are comfortable with each other and with sharing feelings." (pg. 72).

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People Poem

OBJECTIVE: Gently increase each participant's level of self-exposure to the group. By adding one idea and one motion from each person in the group, we'll "choreograph" a free-form poem.

GRADES: K - 12

MATERIALS/SET-UP: This game works best in a circle, but can be done from row seats.

NOTES: "People Poems" are another great warm-up activity to begin any "sharing" time. This will put each person on stage for a minute, but he/she will be speaking for someone else at the time–which takes a little less risk than talking about themselves. Use it to start a conflict resolution lesson about feelings or communications, or as a poetry writing prompt, or before asking students to share something they've written. It's also a good "name game" for a new group or class.

Allow 10-20 seconds per person to complete the acting.

DIRECTIONS:

1) Tell participants you hope they feel creative today. Arrange them in a circle or, if seated in rows, create a "snake" around the room so that each person stands between two others.

2) Announce that you want each person to have one idea about their own favorite thing in the whole world: a favorite thing to do or see. (For younger students, just their favorite thing to do.) Take a moment for everyone to get an idea.

3) Direct everyone to listen to the idea from the person on their right, and to tell their own idea to the person on their left. Take a minute to be sure everyone has told their idea to one person and heard the idea of a different person. (They're NOT exchanging ideas with a partner.)

4) When everyone has heard someone else's thought, tell them that we're going to create a free-form poem together BY ACTING OUT THE IDEAS THEY JUST HEARD. They may use sounds if they need to, but not words until we guess what they're doing. (Expect some moaning and groaning, but that's just discharging their anxiety about self-disclosure! When they realize that everyone takes a turn and they get to watch someone else trying to introduce them, they'll enjoy it.)

5) Proceed around the circle until everyone has had a turn. Allow the group a few attempts to guess each person's favorite thing, but it's OK to tell it after some acting has been done.

DISCUSSION: Lead students to think about how they felt early in the game when you asked them just to think of something themselves...silly? easy? difficult? Had they done it at all before they knew they'd have to tell someone something? Let them know that their own ideas, the ones they think about when they're all by themselves, are very important clues to who they are.

Was it hard to act out somebody's idea? Why? Was it hard watching your idea get acted out? Why? Did we laugh alot? Sometimes we get embarrassed talking about ourselves or letting other people see how we are. Laughing is one natural way people get over being a little bit scared or feeling silly.

In closing, you might notice how many different "favorites" were said, and how many were the same. Compose them into a poem for the classroom.

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ACTIVE LISTENING

"Listening is being silent with another person in an active way."
Morton Kelsey

Everyone deserves to be listened to - to be fully heard. In conflict resolution each person deserves to have their side of the story heard. As educators, we don't always have time to hear each young person. Activities that teach listening and paraphrasing skills to young people insure that more people get heard more often.

Group Storytelling is an excellent listening skills-builder. Young people work in small groups and take turns contributing to a story until everyone has added to it. Tape record the stories, then see if each part is heard and that the story holds together. Priscilla Prutzman provides a variation that has one group pantomime another group's story.

Kriedler's POSITIVE FOCUS GAME calls for dividing the class into groups of three. One youth volunteers to be the focus person. Give the class a topic. (Why I do/don't believe in ghosts... Why I would/not like to go out in space...) The focus person talks for two or three minutes about the topic. The other two people should listen carefully. They are allowed to ask questions of the focus person, never to criticize or to disagree. Finally the two try to remember what the focus person said and paraphrase back to him or her. (pg. 94)

Curwin and Mendler, in their book Positive Discipline, *encourage teachers to use active listening as a conflict de-escalation strategy. By listening and then paraphrasing what young people find upsetting, adults help dissipate the strong emotions and begin the first step in problem solving.*

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You Say,

OBJECTIVE: To teach students preliminary skills in paraphrasing using a simple affirmation exercise.

GRADES: 1-6

MATERIALS: Something that's easy to toss, a bean bag or small beach ball for younger children. Hackisacks are great.

NOTES: Paraphrasing is a category within active listening that is a step-up developmentally. It requires an ability to pay attention to what someone else has said and to repeat it back to them, using your own words. When helping children develop this skill it is necessary to start simply.

Begin with "You say, I say". Using the rule (whoever has the ball talks) explain the exercise in the following way:

1. Think of your favorite (ice cream).
2. I (teacher) will name my favorite (Strawberry)
3. When I toss the ball to (Jaquan), he will say "(Ms. _____. You say strawberry, I say (chocolate)"
4. Jaquan passes it to a new person (Sally). Sally says: "Jaquan, you say chocolate, I say bubblegum", etc. This is not one of those long-winded memory games. Just repeat back what the person before you said. It is helpful to coach the children to say the person's name, and "you" - talking directly to the person and not to the teacher. ("John, you say" rather than "John says," or "he says".) It helps the person feel respected and listened to on a deeper level .

EXTENSION OF THE EXERCISE:

A. So far, the paraphrasing has focused on repeating back information. The next step is to learn how to repeat back someone's feelings as well. (Students will need some prior experience developing feeling vocabulary.) Start simply with some open ended questions: "How would you feel if you tripped in the hall and the whole class saw you?" ("Teandra, you say embarrassed, I say, silly"....).

1. You get to spend the night at your best friend's house.
2. A friend tattles on you.
3. You do great on your report card.
4. A classmate sees your Mom/Dad slap you.
5. Mom/Dad tells you they love you.
6. A family pet dies.
7. Sister/brother/cousin takes something without asking.

B. The skill level can be increased by lengthening the amount of information repeated back. For example: Have students tell their favorite book, and why they like it. ("Shareeka, you say Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry because it's about problems and adventures of a girl your age. I say .....")

1. I feel important when.....
2. The world would be a better place if .....
3. I don't smoke because.....
4. The one thing I want most to accomplish is .....

Another version of this exercise can be found in William Kriedler's book: *Creative Conflict Resolution*, page 94.

I Say

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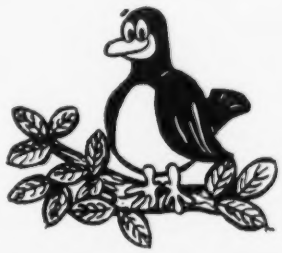
Round Robin

OBJECTIVE: Quick-action practice with the Active Listening skill of identifying people's feelings, and "checking out" what we understand by paraphrasing (restating) what we hear.

GRADES: 3-12.



SET-UP/MATERIALS: Sheet of "Feelings Statements", cut into strips, one for each student. Collect the strips in a box/basket.

DIRECTIONS:

1) Present this activity either as a role-play game to practice understanding and restating other people's feelings, or as a "Test" for listening for feelings. Each student will take a turn listening and trying to restate a line that somebody else will read. Every line is different and says something about what they're doing. We have to guess how they feel about it.

2) Demonstrate the first practice. Move to a student who will pick a "Feelings Statement" slip from your box and ask her to read it dramatically. Demonstrate a good paraphrase of her line that captures what she's talking about (the facts learned) and how you think she feels about it.

ex: She reads: "You never get mad at him, only me."

You restate: "You think I don't get mad at him the way I get mad at you, and that feels unfair? (hurts your feelings?)"

3) Check with the whole group to see if they think you've gotten her meaning right, or how they would say it. (This demonstrates that you will be correcting each listener if they haven't paraphrased entirely.)

4) To make this a "round-robin", the reader will now become the listener. Pass the box of slips to another student to pick out a line and read it (dramatically) to the listener. The listener will have to make a paraphrase to fit. Check with the group to see if they're satisfied.

5) Proceed around the classroom with the box of slips, letting each reader become a listener for the next person, until everyone has had a chance to read and listen. (You'll read the last slip for the last listener.)

DISCUSSION: Compliment the students on how well they've done. Notice with them how often someone might have restated something a little differently? This is fine, because the purpose of paraphrasing is to "check out" whether we're getting the message straight, and there can be many ways to interpret what people say. Question whether they wanted to make up more of their stories when they were the readers? Notice that a helpful thing about paraphrasing is that it will often encourage people to tell you more about their situation.

CONCLUSION: People like to talk to people who understand them. We can show people we understand, or are TRYING to understand, by paraphrasing their facts and feelings.

CHALLENGE ACTIVITY: Practice paraphrasing with your parents and teachers this week, especially when they're giving you directions or are acting like they're mad!

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Listening for Feelings

Enlarge this page for use with "Round Robin".

1. "I just can't figure it out. I give up."
2. "Wow! Eight days until Christmas vacation"
3. "Look at the picture I drew."
4. "Will you be calling my parents?"
5. "What a drag, there's nothing to do."
6. "I'll never do that well. He always does better than me, and I practice."
7. "You never get mad at him, always me."
8. "I'm getting a new 10-speed."
9. "I feel like writing in my book. It's mine anyway."
10. "Yeah, I guess I was mean to him. I shouldn't have done it."
11. "Am I doing this report right? Do you think it will be good enough?"
12. "I can do this part on my own. I don't need your help."
13. "Leave me alone. Nobody cares what happens to me."
14. "I'd like to tell him that, but I can't. He'd probably punch me!"
15. "I don't have a problem. I don't know why I'm here."
16. "My brother's taking me to Kentucky Kingdom tomorrow."
17. "Why are you asking me all these questions?"
18. "Why does it bother her? We always ride each other."
19. "I can't go with you, I need to watch my baby sister."
20. "Yeah, it's fine to say forget it, but what's she gonna do later when you aren't around?"
21. "Don't you like my new hair cut?"
22. "I can't wait till vacation."
23. "I don't have time to talk now. I'll be late for class."
24. "I don't think he/she really likes me."
25. "She told all our friends that I like Darryl."
26. "They never share the ball."
27. "Nothing's wrong. Why do you keep asking so many questions?"
28. "Don't touch my hat man, leave it alone."
29. "I won't call names, if she won't."
30. "He said I was talking about him, but Sheryl told a lie."

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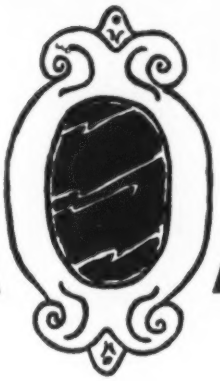
Mirror, Mirror on the Wall



OBJECTIVE: To teach students to focus on the thoughts and feelings of another person.

SET UP/MATERIALS: none

NOTES: Listening does not mean agreement. It means you are willing to set aside your own thoughts and concerns for a while to really hear the feelings, concerns, and questions of another. You don't have to fix the problem, just listen.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Read out the scenarios below.

2. After each one, ask the class what the person making the statement was a) thinking and b) feeling.

3. Remind students, "Remember you are using your words to be a mirror for someone else's thinking and feeling. For example, if someone says to you 'Mirror, mirror on the wall, who's the fairest of them all?' The person is thinking 'who is the best looking woman round here' and the feeling is 'Insecure that it might not be you?'".

A) "I'm always blowing up at John. Later I realize there was little reason for it. What's wrong with me?"

THINKING _____

FEELING _____

B) "My teacher blames me for things I didn't even do."

THINKING _____

FEELING _____

C) "I studied and studied for the test today. And I still think I failed."

THINKING _____

FEELING _____

D) "Someone's started a rumor about me."

THINKING _____

FEELING _____

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Conversation Ball

(Adapted from the "Listening-Checking" exercise in *Cooperative Learning, Cooperative Lives* by Nancy Schneidewind, p. 27.)

GRADES: 3-12

OBJECTIVE: Students will be coached to use paraphrasing as an Active Listening skill, and at the same time develop some understanding of each other's values and behavior.

SET-UP/MATERIALS: One small, soft ball or other object (stuffed animal, etc.) to toss around room.

NOTES: Here is an excellent lesson to introduce important information about each other (cognitive level), and change some attitudes (affective skills) at the same time...always a more exciting way to learn!

DIRECTIONS:

1. Use a topic where interpretation and understanding of what others are saying is necessary. Controversial topics about current conflict are best. Some suggestions.

—Students say they fight because they haven't gotten "respect"...they've been "dissed". How do you know that you've gotten someone's "respect"?

—If you were making an advice booklet for parents/teachers what should they know about young people?

—What are some effective ways you have handled putdowns or stood up for yourself?

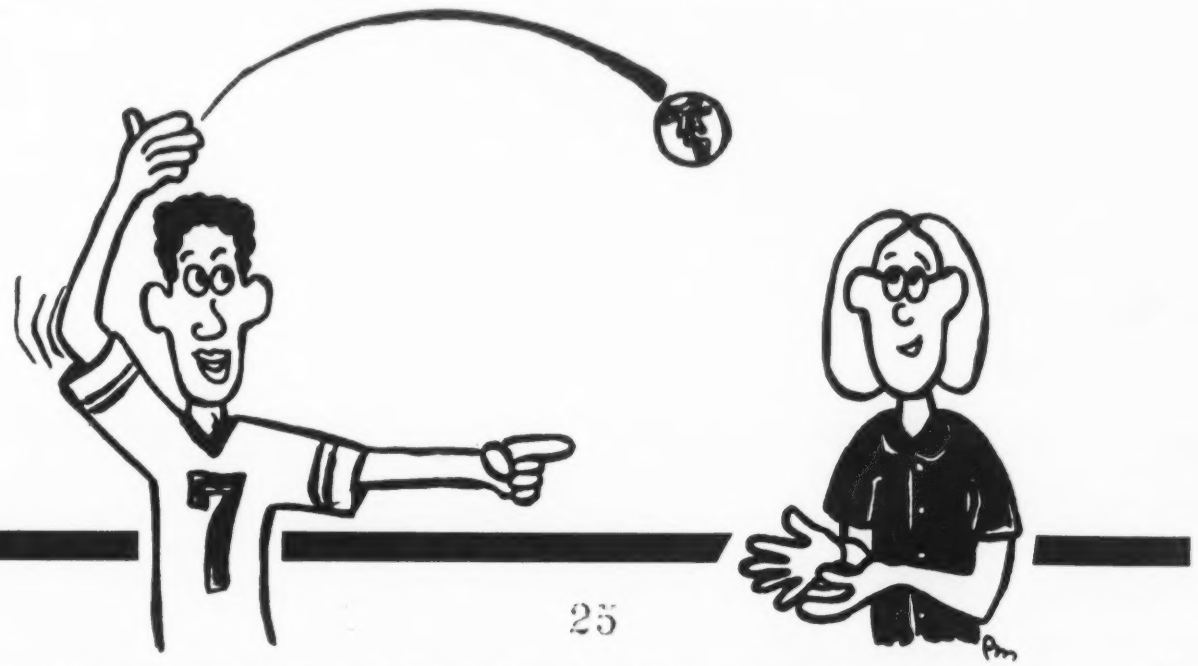
—What are some of the things you would like about being another gender or race?

—What are some of the ways to better get to know people different from yourself—different neighborhood, race, gender, or age?

2. Explain that after the first person speaks, the next person must restate what was important about what the speaker said before they add their own thoughts. Restating is done in the second person's own words, but accurately enough that the first person is satisfied that he/she was understood. If the second person can't do that, then the first speaker should repeat until they are understood.

3. The first speaker will pick the second speaker by tossing the "Conversation Ball" to them.

4. Each speaker must restate (paraphrase) before giving her/his contribution. Discussion proceeds in this manner, taking time to slow-down the controversy and concentrate on what each person is saying.



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SAMPLE DIALOGUE FROM STUDENTS IN JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Teacher: "A lot of people say they had to fight because somebody wasn't showing them any RESPECT ...They got "dissed...or disrespected. But I want to know exactly how you KNOW somebody respects you or disrespects you. What do they do, exactly?"

#1

"They talk to you when you talk to them."

- Teacher: How? How do they act?

"They just talk back. Friendly."

#2

"She said...; and I think it's important if they look at you, `cause some people just flip you off or are too cool to really talk to you."

#3

"She said...; but you can't make somebody be friendly to you. I don't care what they say, they just better not mess with me."

- Teacher: Be clear, we're not talking about making friends. I asked about "Respect". Why does (#2) want people to look at her?

(Let someone else paraphrase...) *"...She doesn't want to be ignored."* (Thanks)

— Teacher: But what do you mean by "messing with" you?

"In my face. Bringing in all this talk that don't matter."

4

"She says, they'd better not start mouthin' off at her, I can't stand it when people butt in and take over a conversation."

- Teacher: And tell me how they ARE supposed to get your attention.

"They should say, `Excuse me, but can I ask you something?"

#5

"She says they should have common courtesy, but people should also have enough respect not to jump down your throat if you make a mistake. Like if you cut them off in the hall or bump into them without meaning to, that doesn't give them the right to slam you."

#6

"Most people around here have a problem noticing anybody but their own selves!"

- Teacher: First, what was important to (#5)?

"She doesn't want to be hollered at."

- Teacher: (Keep prompting group to get the whole meaning of what someone says.) "Who wants to add anything else that was important?"

7

"She wants you to believe that it was a mistake and she doesn't disrespect you."

- Teacher: (Check with Speaker #5) "Did we get it?" (Proceed to assist dialogue between #5 & 6, letting them talk till they've said what they want, and each can paraphrase what's important to the other.

5

"Yeah, Why should I spend any time on someone who's jumping all over me and won't believe me?"

#6

"You think people are jumping on you and can't take your apology. I agree it's disrespectful to holler at people, but if you find out you made the mistake then you should still say `Sorry' or `Excuse me.'"

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OPEN QUESTIONS

Creating a classroom environment where questions are encouraged lets young people know that their thoughts are important to you. Allow them to question you and model a non-defensive response when students ask "why" you're doing a particular class activity. You remain in charge, deciding what is and is not up for discussion. Paired sharing activities are an excellent 1st step in teaching young people to listen to one another and ask simple non-threatening questions.

A fine tuning of the skills begins when they are able to ask questions in a way that:

lets the person know you're listening
elicits more than a yes/no answer
decreases defensiveness
gleans more information about a person's point of view

Any activities that help young people recognize that there are different sides to any story, different experiences that lead them to oftentimes opposing points of view on a topic. Model delight in understanding someone else's experiences, beliefs, and values that are different than your own.

Kriedler has several exercises that deal with perceptions including "Different Angles" that directs students to fold paper into thirds. Have them choose something to draw, then draw it from 3 different angles. (pg. 88)

In another exercise,"People Perceive Differently", he suggests that the teacher:

1. *Show the class a picture and ask them to list three things that are important (or interesting) about it.*
2. *Have the students rank order their observations from most important to least.*
3. *Have them share their lists. Remind them there are no right or wrong answers. Point out not only that different people saw different things, but that they felt different things were important or interesting.*

When conflicts do occur in the classroom, decide if this is one of those "teachable moments" where you can help the class understand the point of view of each disputant.

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Oprah

OBJECTIVE: Students will practice a number of previously-learned skills involved in effective communication — attention, paraphrasing, self-disclosure — and focus on "asking open questions" as a new skill.

GRADES: 5-12

SET-UP/MATERIALS: Three or four chairs at the front of the room for the "Panel."
One "microphone" (a large-headed black marker will do.)

NOTES: Part of the beauty of this activity is that it allows students a chance to speak out on topics that are important to them. If we choose a vital topic and speakers, this activity can often get passionate; all the better for creating a lively question and answer session that really pulls the "Audience" into the process.

Good "Oprah Show" topics which open a discussion about conflict resolution skills are..."Today!... On Oprah...."

"~When do young people have to speak up to defend themselves or someone else?"
"~Tell us about a time you stood up for something that mattered?"
"~The best ways to handle angry situations without anyone getting hurt?"
"~What City and School officials need to know if they really want to 'Stop the Violence'!"

DIRECTIONS:

1) Announce to students that we'll be practicing another important listening skill today: Asking "open" questions.

2) Reference the last TV Talk Show you might have seen and ask the group what they think makes their favorite star so good at their job? (get people involved; act like they're interested; get people to talk personally...)

3) Point out that what often happens on the TV shows gets the whole audience involved asking questions, sometimes telling some of their own stories, and sometimes arguing with the Panel.

"Today, we're not interested in the arguments. Let's just see if we can learn about some interesting experiences by asking as many good questions as you want."

[HERE, YOU'LL TEACH THEM ABOUT "GOOD QUESTIONS."]

A "good question" HELPS THE SPEAKER TALK more about what's important to him/her. A "good question" is OPEN-ENDED. How can you tell that a question is open-ended? ...YOU CAN'T TELL THE OPINION OF THE PERSON WHO ASKS IT! AND IT CAN'T BE ANSWERED WITH A YES OR NO.

ex. "What did you do *that* for?" (blaming tone)

"What did you *do* that for?" (angry tone)

or "What were you trying to do?" (kind tone)

4) Explain to the group that there are 3 roles to play on our Talk Show today: 1 Host, 3-5 Panelists, the Audience...and you, the Producing Director, who signals for station breaks, cuts and closing time.

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5) *Selecting the HOST*: Ask the group who they think would make a good "Oprah" from their class? There will be a number of nominations and discussion. Select someone who likes to be in front of people. Tell them that their job will be to LISTEN, PARAPHRASE WHAT PEOPLE SAY, and TAKE QUESTIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE.

Selecting the PANELISTS: Decide on a useful topic (see above) and ask the class for volunteers (nominations accepted) who can talk about their experience on the topic.
3 - 5 panelists will be enough. (The host may want to allow them each an introductory statement.)

Prompting the AUDIENCE: Let the Audience know that their role is to ask as many questions as they need to find out what these panelists know, think, and feel about the topic. Point out again that

a) *this* Host and Producer won't let audience members attack the panelists,

b) the Producer will be calling for "Station Breaks" when everyone should be able to tell the difference between "Open" questions and personal stories or biased statements hiding behind questions.

PRODUCER: Be prepared to signal for "Station Break" after a few questions have been taken, to discuss whether these are "open questions" and what other information we might want to explore.

Cue the Audience with the well-known line...

"TODAY!...ON __(new name here)__!...."

SAMPLE DIALOGUE

Topic: KIDS WHO'VE HAD TO SPEAK UP FOR THEMSELVES....

Panelist #1: "Everybody in my neighborhood and in my old school act like I can't do right, mostly because of how my older brothers act."

Oprah: "So, you say people know your brothers and now they all treat you like you're mean, too?"

Audience: "How does that make you feel?"

"Like it doesn't matter what I do."

"What did your brother do?"

Producer: "TIME OUT: Is this an open question? Is it about James or his brothers? Will that help James keep talking about himself or make him think we're judging him by what his brother did? What else do you need to know about James?"

"Do you still love your brothers?"

"Yeah, but I'm not like them and I'm not gonna' be like them."

Panelist #2: "I had to call my neighbor over one night to stop my Dad from hitting my mom. They got the police, and Mom and I had to move out."

Audience: "Are you scared of your Dad?"

"Yeah, kinda. But sometimes they talk now. It's better."

"Was he mad at you?"

"I didn't care. I was mad at him, too."

Producer: This Station Break is a great time for a commercial about the Spouse Abuse Center and good counselors...just a phone call away.

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ASSERTION

Assertion is about teaching young people and adults to stand up for themselves, their family and friends, their beliefs (who they are and whose they are) without knocking down someone else with bodies or words.

An assertion statement (what we call The Friendly Formula) is a tool for clearly stating what you're thinking and how you're feeling about a situation in a way that doesn't accuse the other person. It can be used to stand up for yourself or to appreciate someone. Along with this lesson it's important to teach that each of us have different styles/ways of standing up for ourselves (see "Walks" activity) and that we're reaching for ways to assert ourselves that take care of our needs and are respectful of the other person (see "Conversation Ball").

By helping young people to strengthen their assertion skills, we interrupt the cycles of aggression or withdrawal they have learned. As was mentioned in the previous section, creating an environment where young people's thoughts, feelings, needs and opinions are valued is crucial.

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The Friendly Formula

OBJECTIVE: To teach students "I statements"

GRADES: 2-12

MATERIALS:
- Newsprint/Poster board and markers
- Optional: copy of sheet for each student.

NOTES: It's a good idea to practice telling people how you feel when they do certain things you like. They may want to do it more often. It's also important to let them know when they do something you don't like. They may stop or change what they do.

USING THE EXAMPLE BELOW OR YOUR OWN, TEACH STUDENTS

There are 5 steps in the Friendly Formula:

1. Name (say the person's name) _____,
2. I feel (tell how you feel) _____
3. When you (describe what they did)
4. Because (explain why) _____.
5. I want _____.

For example, your brother goes in your room & takes your gameboy without asking:

1. Bobby,
2. I feel mad
3. When you go in my room and take my gameboy without asking
4. Because I'm afraid you might break it.
5. I want you to ask first.

Invite students to bring up their own examples with brothers/sisters first. Coach them how to use the formula each time. When they've had more practice, help them to use it with each other on classroom issues.

STUDENT ASSIGNMENT

Use the Friendly Formula in these situations:

1. A friend lets you ride his/her bike.
2. A friend pushes in front of you in line.
3. A brother/sister tattletales.
4. A sister/brother lends you a quarter.
5. Mom/dad calls you "baby" when you cry.

Think of a problem you've had recently. Write down your own Friendly Formula.

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WIN-WIN PROBLEM SOLVING

Most of us know what it's like to be in a conflict and have one person "win" and the other "lose". It's rare where both people feel like winners. That's what we reach for in teaching conflict resolution skills. William Kriedler reminds us that "Approaching a conflict as if both parties could win completely changes our orientation toward conflict resolution. Attention shifts away from the participants and onto their problem and how to solve it." (p. 14, Creative Conflict Resolution)

Our goal is to help young people explore and utilize a whole range of responses available to them that exist between the traditional responses of violence and inaction.

Increasing opportunities for cooperative efforts - encouraging young people to work together toward mutual goals - will strengthen their willingness to resolve problems with mutual benefit in mind. Playing cooperative games can be an excellent source for teaching that everyone can win. Kriedler and Prutzmann (see bibliography) have entire sections of their books devoted to cooperative games and activities.

TUG OF PEACE (Kriedler, p. 131)

Materials: long rope, tied to form a large circle
Procedure: Lay the rope out in a circle. Have students seat themselves around it and grab hold. Explain that the object of the game is for all the members of the group to raise themselves to a standing position by pulling on the rope. If anyone falls the group loses. Count to three and say, "Go"
(It's harder than it sounds!)

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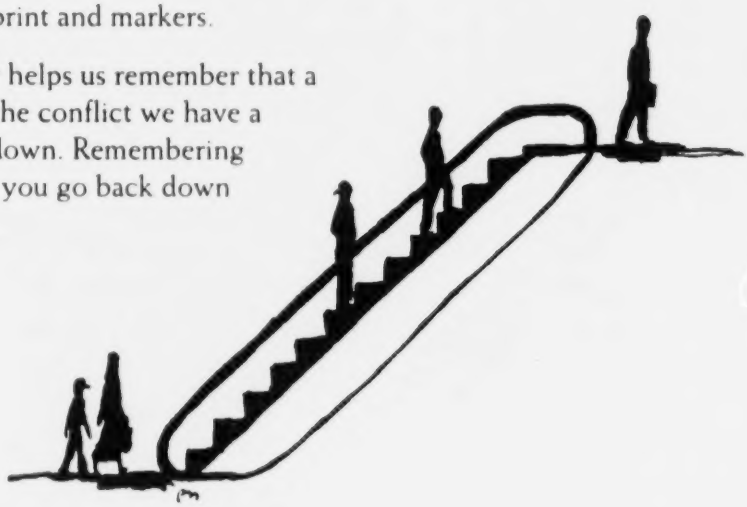
Taking a Ride on the Conflict Escalator

OBJECTIVE: To teach and demonstrate how our actions can escalate or de-escalate conflict.

GRADES: 2-12

MATERIALS: Chalkboard, chalk or newsprint and markers.

NOTES: Using the image of the escalator helps us remember that a conflict has many stages. At each step of the conflict we have a choice to go up (make it worse) or to go down. Remembering some of the skills you've learned will help you go back down the escalator:



Body Language

The Friendly Formula

Listening and Repeating what the other person said

Engaging Cooperation

DIRECTIONS:
USING A STORY LIKE THIS, OR A ROLE PLAY OF A TYPICAL CONFLICT, BEGIN A "CHALK TALK" WITH YOUR CLASS:

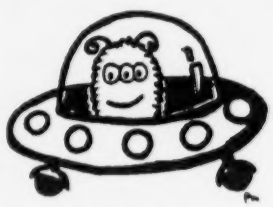
Sharika and Tara are best friends. They call each other names all the time for fun. Only this time Tara went too far and called Sharika a "punk", then Sharika called Tara a "geek". Tara talked about Sharika's Mamma and then Sharika did the same thing back. They ended with pushing and shoving.

If we use the escalator to help us draw their problem, this is what it might look like: (Teacher, start at the bottom of the board/paper and draw steps up. Have the class help you fill in the steps. Diagram what happened 1st, 2nd, etc.).

After diagramming the escalator, have students talk about what kind of actions each character in the story could do to bring the conflict down.

DISCUSSION:

Pretend a Martian came to your school and observed conflict between you and a friend/classmate. Draw the problem on an escalator. Make sure you draw all the parts of the conflict and how it went up. What could they do to bring it down?



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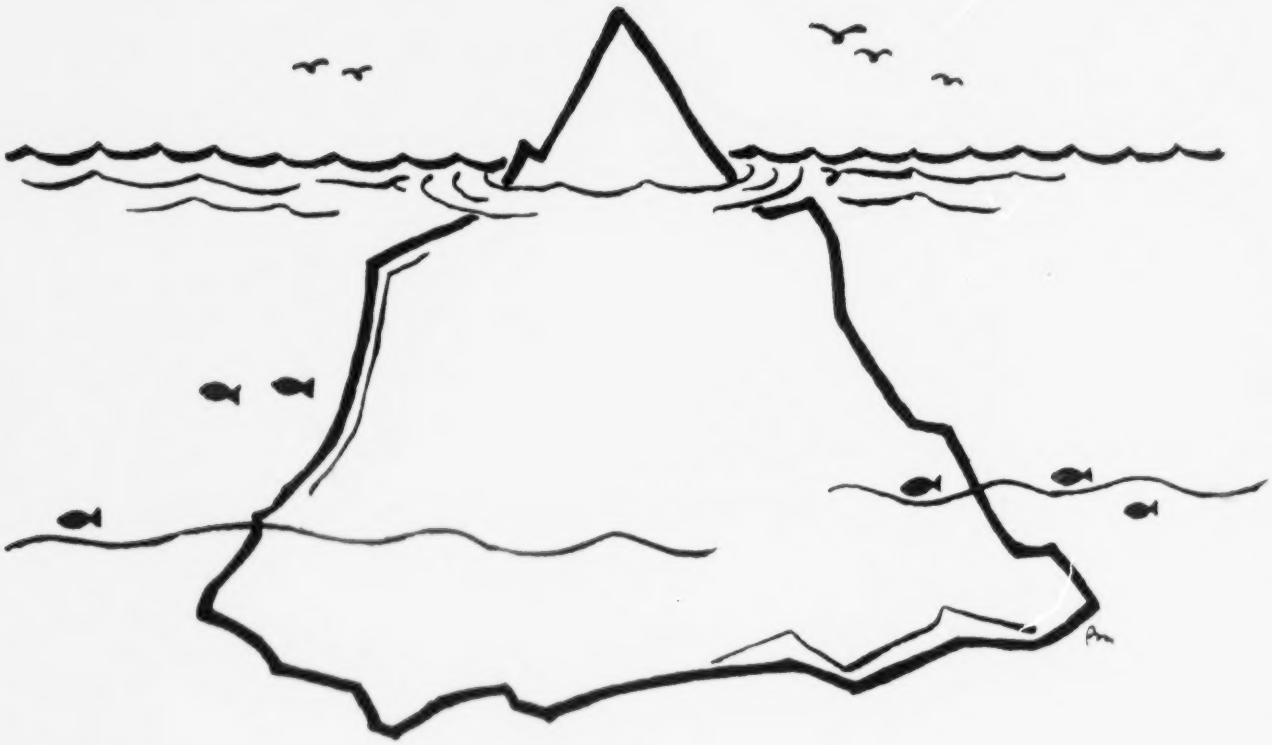

Tip of the Iceberg

OBJECTIVE: To help students look below the surface of conflicts

GRADES: 4-12

MATERIALS: Chalkboard, chalk or newsprint and markers

NOTES: Sometimes what we see is only the top of the problem or the "Tip of the Iceberg". When training children to resolve conflicts we encourage them to remember that conflicts, fights, differences have many layers. What we see on the surface is only a portion of the actual problem. Just as with icebergs, ships at sea that only pay attention to the "tip", or what can be seen on the surface, risk a serious collision with what's underneath the tip. Many times the problems underneath are bigger than the problem at the tip.

USING THIS STORY OR ONE OF YOUR OWN, BEGIN A "CHALK TALK" WITH THE CLASS:

Problem: You're walking down the hall. You see Jonathan and Drew are pushing and shoving, shouting at each other. (That's the tip of the iceberg) When you ask what happened, Jonathan tells you that he accidentally tripped over Drew's books and Drew called him "clumsy". Drew says he's late for class and that Jonathan won't help him pick up his books.

What's at the tip?

What are the problems underneath?

What are some ways to solve the problem?

STUDENT ASSIGNMENT

Describe a conflict you saw recently. Then diagram it on your own Iceberg. Remember to name the tip of the problem, as well as the concerns underneath.

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Hassle Line

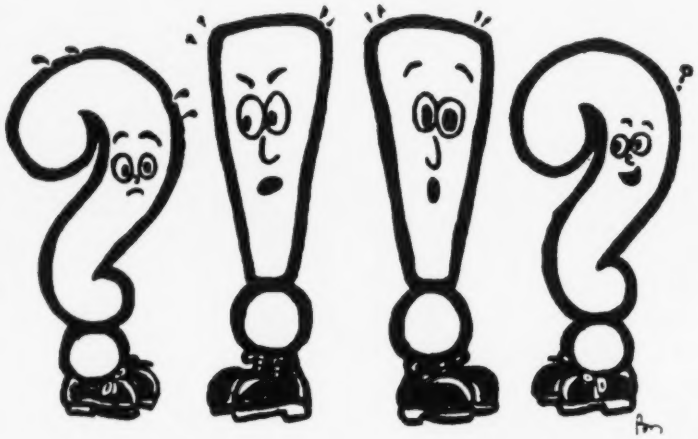
OBJECTIVE: Use this quick-action role-play to help students begin to gain flexibility with their style of handling conflict by identifying a variety of ways people try to handle the same situation.

MATERIALS/SET-UP: The space should allow room for two rows of 5-15 students to stand and face each other. No other materials are needed.

NOTES: "Hassle Lines" serve as good warm-up activities, especially if you want to conduct further role-playing. Activities that have everyone up at the same time, afford everyone the same degree of protection while they practice acting out their ideas and require only a low trust level as they size up the group. There are no right or wrong answers here. We're looking for variety.

DIRECTIONS: 1) Announce that you want the class to show you how different students treat a common problem. If you haven't had a brainstorm discussion yet with your group about what kinds of conflicts they often see, this is a good time for it.

2) Choose a fairly direct, physical conflict to start with, ex. physical contact in a crowded hall between classes, or a splash of food that messes up someone's clothes in the cafeteria.



3) Have the entire class divide in half and form two rows of students standing face-to-face with each other... "If you can shake hands with someone across from you, you have a partner." Check for any extra's, and have an odd-one-out help you observe the group's reactions.

4) Placing yourself at the head of the lines, announce that one entire side will play one character, ex: a student who is strutting down the hall, maybe calling out to someone they want to catch up with, when they bump into the second character. The other entire side will play the second character who is going to get bumped. Repeat the directions, pointing out which row is to play which character.

5) Explain that everyone will have less than a minute to play out this situation, all at the same time, and they should role-play this any way that they've seen people handle it. (We're not looking for the "best" solutions here; we're looking for the variety of possible responses.)

6) Call "Time!" or "Cut!" when you've seen that each pair has had some engagement for a few seconds.

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DISCUSSION: 1) Note: Emphasizing that they were to act "any way they've seen..." may prompt some students to "act out" something they don't actually often do themselves...including the most obnoxious and disruptive behaviors. If we get 15 examples of outrageous confrontations on the "first take", use it as an opportunity to discuss how chaotic and threatening the halls apparently feel. Then challenge the group to notice how other students in the same situation are actually handling it. Try "Take 2", if needed, with more variety in mind.

2) Start de-briefing the partners for what they thought and what they did in this situation, ex:

Confrontations = pushed back, hollered, called someone a name, blamed for being too slow/too rude;

Denial/Avoidance = jump back/duck, say nothing (scared), apologize for being there, mutter something but say it's OK;

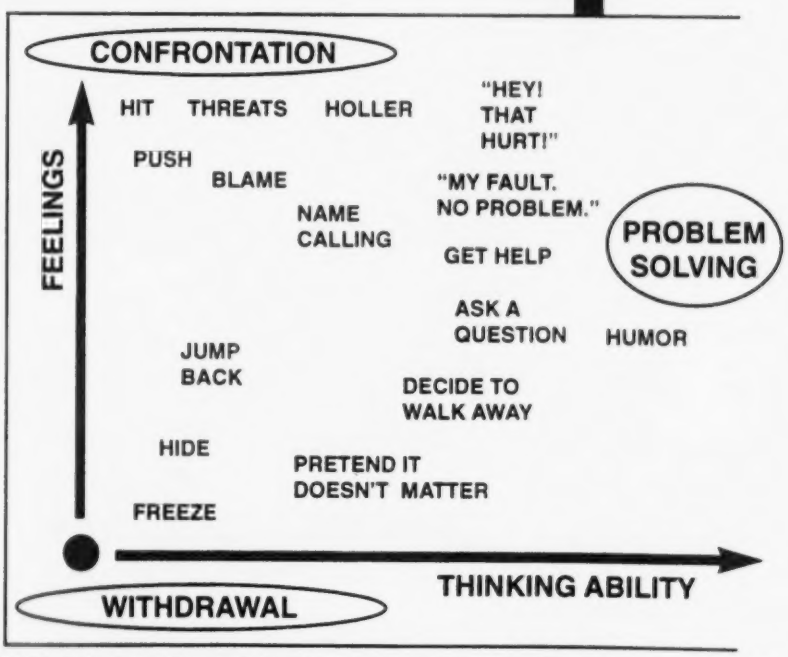
Problem-Solving = apologize ("my fault"), forgive ("no problem"), take it with a sense of humor (one student exaggerated a football call for "unnecessary roughness"), tell a teacher, let them know what they did ("Hey! that was my arm!" "That hurt!"), ask a question ("Where 'ya going?")

3) Ask students which reactions tend to escalate or de-escalate the situation? Which ones might actually get someone to slow down or help you out? Ask them to think about how many different ways they could handle a situation like this without getting anybody hurt?

CONCLUSION: Psychologists & Biologists talk about three basic ways people handle conflict: Confrontation (Fight), Avoidance/Denial (Flight/pretending that the pain isn't important), and Problem-Solving (Working it out.) All 3 ways CAN WORK at certain times, but if we don't want someone left getting hurt or scared, we'll have to try problem-solving.

* CONFLICT-SOLVING GRAPH:

A good visual display of these responses will look like a Graph (See drawing, right)...try it for a math/science lesson!



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M&M

OBJECTIVE: Discussion of "Win-Win" problem-solving possibilities.

GRADES: 2-12

MATERIALS: Small package of candies/raisins/peanuts for each child.

NOTES: It's important not to call this an "arm wrestle".

DIRECTIONS:

1. Clearly display or distribute enough packs of treats for every student and announce that we're going to play a game that shows how often we get stuck thinking that we have to fight to win over somebody else who has to lose.

2. Tell everyone that you want everyone to leave here with a pack of M&M's/SweeTarts/raisins, and they'll get to "win" them. If they'll listen carefully you'll tell them exactly what to do to win a pack before you call "Go."

3. Follow these directions: "Turn to a partner. Put your right elbows on the table in front of your partner and take your partner's hand." (If someone complains that they're left handed...or too small to win...reassure them that they can work that out on their own.) "Every time you get your partner's arm down, you'll win one M&M/SweeTart from your pack. But you only have 10 seconds to win the whole pack (so just keep count; you'll lose time if you try to get your candy.) REPEAT: "You only have 10 seconds, and I WANT YOU BOTH TO WIN."

4. Repeat Directions if needed. Tell them you'll call "Time" in 10 seconds. "Everybody ready? Go!.....Time's up."

DISCUSSION: We begin by asking the class a few questions:

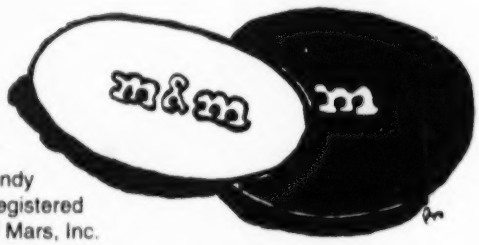
- Who has won their whole pack?
- Who didn't get any?
- How many of you got some each?
- Any partners here who <u>both</u> won their <u>whole</u> packs?
- How does it feel to win when your partner didn't get any/as many? (Notice different responses.)
- How does it feel to lose and see other people getting something you don't have? What can you do about it? (Notice different responses.)

There are a number of lessons to observe from this activity:

1. It's possible to follow the rules AND BOTH WIN.

"Remember I told you I wanted you BOTH to win? Where are the partners who BOTH WON THEIR PACKS?" How? Watch them. (If none, "How can you both win 'by getting your partner's arm down'?— Take turns; Talk about it; Compromise, etc.)

2. Problem-solving takes flexible thinking, or Attack the Problem, Not the Person:



"M & M's" candy design is a registered trademark of Mars, Inc.

(more on next page)

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"Remember that I didn't say you were enemies or opponents! I didn't say you couldn't talk about it, or you had to fight. I never called this an "Arm Wrestle"! But a lot of people think we're playing the old game as soon as I show you what position to get in...Conflict is a lot like that: It's easy to think you have to fight, but maybe you can both get what you want another way."

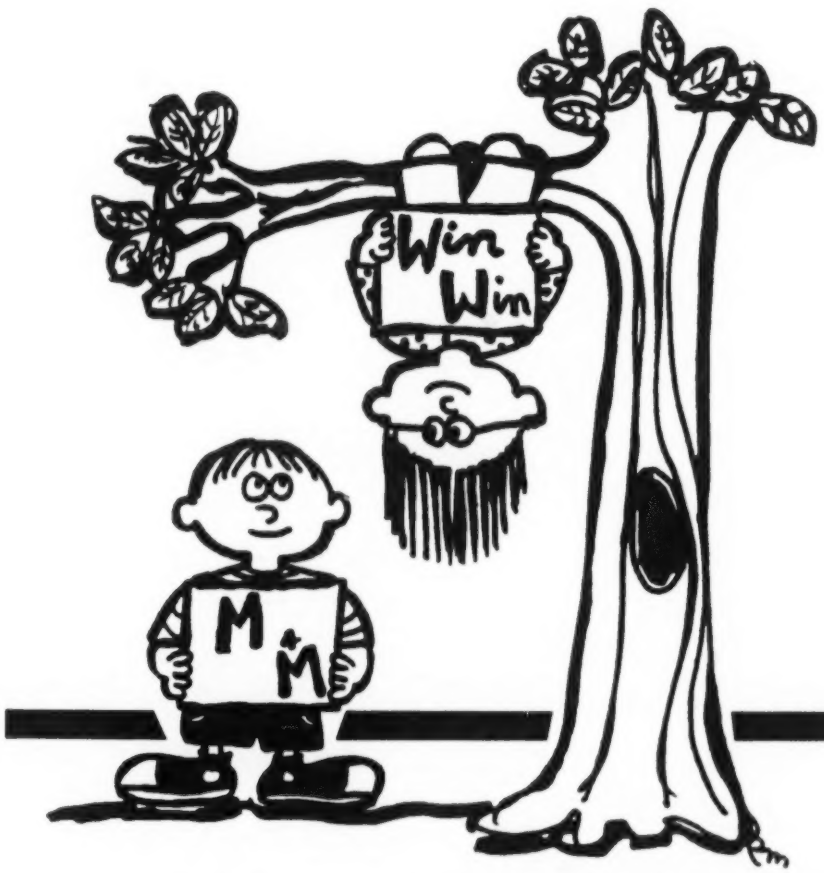
3. Sometimes people LIKE to fight.

There could be a child or two who refuses to pay attention to the rules of this game, and keep wrestling! First, interrupt this behavior by repeating that NEITHER will win today unless they BOTH CAN WIN. (If you've been distributing packages, you can gently emphasize this by removing their packs....That usually gets a laugh.) Notice aloud that some people look at a conflict or problem and immediately say "I can't do this." "I won't win." or "I don't want to play because...it's not fair, or I don't like this candy, anyway." We call this way of handling conflict an "**avoidance strategy**" and sometimes it's a smart way to handle conflict. Ask for examples from the students.

Sometimes people look at a problem or conflict and think "I know I can beat them!" or "They can't get away with that!" and push as hard as they can to get their way. We call that a "**confrontation**" [Front-to-Front].

A good example of legitimate confrontation could be teachers breaking up a fight...OR sports and games, like the old "Arm Wrestle." (Students who want to play that, still can after school!)

AND, many times there are other ways in-between, when we ask questions or say "I want to talk to you" or find another way to stay friendly and get something you want. That's "**problem-solving.**" Discuss examples.



CONCLUSION: "LET'S GET UNSTUCK FROM THINKING THAT WE CAN ONLY FIGHT ABOUT CONFLICTS, AND START THINKING OF WIN-WIN WAYS TO SETTLE THINGS."

Give everyone a chance to play the game again so everyone wins their whole pack.

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Engaging Cooperation

Based on exercises from the book and video: *How to Talk so Kids Will Listen and Listen so Kids will Talk* by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish.

OBJECTIVE: One of the built-in frustrations of being an adult who works with children is "the daily struggle to get children to behave in ways that are acceptable to us and to society.....A lot of passion goes into helping children adjust to societal norms. And somehow the more intense we become, the more actively they resist."

Here are ways to engage our children's cooperation without doing harm to their self-esteem or leaving them with such a backwash of bad feelings:

NOTES: Using a typical classroom problem, here are five techniques that we have found helpful. Not every one of them will work with every child. Not every skill will suit your personality. And there isn't any one of them that is effective all the time. What these five skills do, however, is create a climate of respect in which the spirit of cooperation can begin to grow.

SAMPLE PROBLEM: A learning group leaves materials on the floor after completing a project.

1. DESCRIBE. DESCRIBE WHAT YOU SEE, OR DESCRIBE THE PROBLEM.

"The materials are not returned to their proper place. Whoever needs to use them next won't know where they are."

2. GIVE INFORMATION.

"When the materials are left on the floor, someone might hurt themselves and /or damage our stuff."

3. SAY IT WITH A WORD.

"Clean-up."

4. TALK ABOUT YOUR FEELINGS.

"I am frustrated when the materials aren't put away because they might get damaged."

5. WRITE A NOTE.

On the materials: "If you leave me here to lie, someone else might trip and cry."

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Conflict Resolution Bibliography

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Elizabeth Crary, *Kids Can Cooperate*, Parenting Press. 7750 31st Ave. NE, Seattle, WA 98115

Barbara Davis and Paul Godfrey, *Fussbusters Teacher's Guild*, The Mediation Center. 189 College St. Asheville, NC 28801 (4-6)

Roger Fisher, *Getting Together*, Houghton-Mifflin Co. 222 Berkeley St. Boston, MA 02116 (Adults)

Roger Fisher and William Ury, *Getting To Yes*, Penguin Books. 40 W. 23rd St., New York, NY 10010 (Adults)

Thomas Gordon, *TET: Teacher Effectiveness Training*, Peter H. Wyden Publishing. 750 Third Ave., New York, NY 10017 (Adults)

Sandy Kalmakoff, et al., *Peer Conflict Resolution Through Creative Negotiation*, Public Education for Peace Society. P.O. Box 2320, New Westminster, B.C. V3L5A5, Canada (4-6)

William J. Kreidler, *Creative Conflict Resolution*, Scott, Foresman, & Co.. 1900 East Lake Ave., Glenview, IL 60025 (K-6)

Prutzman, Stern, Burger, & Bodenhamer, *The Friendly Classroom for a Small Planet*, CCRC. P.O. Box 271, Nyack, NY 10960-0271 (K-6)

Nancy Schniedewind and Ellen Davidson, *Cooperative Learning, Cooperative Lives*, William C. Brown Co. 2460 Kerper Blvd. Dubuque, IA 52001 (4-9)

Nancy Schniedewind and Ellen Davidson, *Open Minds To Equality*, William C. Brown Co. 260 Kerper Blvd. Dubuque, IA 52001 (4-9)

Fran Schmidt and Alice Friedman, *Creative Conflict Solving for Kids*, The Grace Contrino Abrams Peace Education Foundation, Inc.. 2627 Biscayne Blvd., Miami Beach, FL, 33119 (4-9)

Fran Schmidt and Alice Friedman, *Fighting Fair: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. for Kids*, (book and video), The Grace Contrino Abrams Peace Education Foundation, Inc.. 2627 Biscayne Blvd., Miami Beach, FL, 33119 (4-9)

Faye W. Wampler and Susan Hess, *Conflict Mediation for a New Generation: Training Manual for Educators*, Community Mediation Center. C83-A North Main St., Harrisonburg, VA 22801 (4-12)

Wellness Reproductions, *Illustrated Feelings Poster*, Wellness Reproductions. 23945 Mercantile Rd., Beachwood, OH 44122 (1-800-669-9208) (K-6)

Additional Resources

Community Board (a community-based mediation center): Trainings, quarterly newsletter, books, videos, articles, etc., 1540 Market St. #490 San Francisco, CA 94102 (415-552-1250)

National Association for Mediation in Education (NAME): Quarterly newsletter, national directory of programs, books, articles, etc., 425 Amity St., Amherst, MA 01002 (413-545-2462)

National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI): Trainings and workshops on prejudice reduction and coalition building, 1835 K St. NW Suite 715, Washington, D.C. 20026 (202-785-9400) Louisville KY Chapter, Judy Schroeder (502-589-6583)

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Evaluation Form

for Peace Education Program Booklet for Teachers

Please Note: Not all lessons are for all age groups. Select those lessons that are most appropriate for you and your students. *Also note that the lessons are arranged in levels of increasing complexity.* Do not attempt the most complicated lessons unless your students are well prepared.

CHECKLIST OF LESSONS IN THIS BOOK

Please star the lessons you think are best.

Please put a check by the one(s) you used in class.

_____ 1. Leprechauns

_____ 2. My Potato

_____ 3. Walks

_____ 4. Feelings Charades

_____ 5. How High is Your Temper-ature?

_____ 6. Anger Rattles

_____ 7. People Poem

_____ 8. You Say, I Say

_____ 9. Round Robin

_____ 10. Mirror, Mirror

_____ 11. Conversation Ball

_____ 12. Oprah!

_____ 13. Friendly Formula

_____ 14. Conflict Escalator

_____ 15. Tip of the Iceberg

_____ 16. Hassle Line

_____ 17. M & M's

_____ 18. Engaging Cooperation

1. What was most helpful about the lessons you used?

2. Were the directions for classroom activities clear enough (yes or no)? If not, which directions were not clear?

3. Were the lessons you used gender inclusive? Why or why not?

4. Were the lessons you used race inclusive. Why or why not?

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS ON NEXT PAGE

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5. Briefly describe how your students responded to the lessons.

6. Were there any lessons you would avoid? Which one(s) and why?

7. Please share one story of how your students responded to these activities.

Additional comments:

Name School

THE PEACE EDUCATION PROGRAM
318 W. KENTUCKY STREET
LOUISVILLE, KY 40203
(502) 589-6583

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